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**GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM**

**LINKAGES AMONG AND SUPPORT TO ENVIRONMENTAL AND  
ENVIRONMENT-RELATED CONVENTIONS**

**RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE HIGH-LEVEL GOVERNMENT-DESIGNATED  
EXPERTS MEETING OF THE PROPOSED NORTHEAST PACIFIC REGIONAL  
SEAS PROGRAMME CONCERNING THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME  
OF ACTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MARINE  
ENVIRONMENT FROM LAND-BASED  
SOURCES OF POLLUTION**

Note by the Executive Director

This information note is submitted in response to operative paragraph 2 of Governing Council decision 20/20 (establishment of a regional seas programme for the East Central Pacific) inviting the Governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama to endorse the proposed meeting of high-level Government-designated experts to review the proposals for a convention and plan of action for the protection of the marine and coastal environment of the East Central Pacific region.

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\* UNEP/GC.21/1.

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**Resolution adopted by the High-Level Government-designated Experts Meeting  
of the Proposed Northeast Pacific Regional Seas Programme concerning  
the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine  
Environment from Land-Based Sources of Pollution**

Panama City, 8 September 2000

In accordance with Governing Council decisions 19/14E and 20/20, the First Meeting of High-Level, Government-Designated Experts of the Proposed Northeast Pacific Regional Seas Programme met in Panama City from 5 to 8 September 2000 for the purpose of negotiating a convention and action plan for the protection and sustainable development of the Northeast Pacific. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Governments of Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama. A major result of the meeting was the initiation of a preparatory process linking the region to the 2001 Intergovernmental Review of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Sources of Pollution (GPA), as called for in Governing Council decision 20/19B, that will culminate in a regional workprogramme for the period 2001-2006. The text of the GPA-relevant decision adopted by the meeting is reproduced below in its entirety. Progress in the implementation of this decision, including the preparation of an action-oriented regional assessment on land-based sources and activities as a means of identifying priority pollutant source categories and the corresponding actions needed, will be reviewed at the Second Meeting of High-Level, Government-Designated Experts to be held in Managua, Nicaragua from 12 to 16 March 2001.

GPA-relevant Decision adopted by the Panama Meeting

Considering that the protection of the marine and coastal environment of the Northeast Pacific region against land-based activities constitutes a fundamental component of both the Convention and the Action Plan for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Marine and Coastal Area of the Northeast Pacific, as well as the role of the Regional Seas Programme as the main mechanism for the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA), the expert meeting notes with satisfaction the close collaboration between UNEP's Division of Environmental Conventions and the GPA Coordination Office.

In view of the above, and after a general review of the documents related to the first GPA Intergovernmental Review (which will take place in late 2001), submitted to the present meeting by the GPA Coordination Office, the experts agreed that this meeting marks the beginning of the preparatory process of the Northeast Pacific region leading to such an Intergovernmental Review meeting. As part of this process, the experts have agreed on the following:

1. The delegates of the countries participating in the present meeting, subject to the approval of their respective Governments, will act as the GPA National Focal Points for the regional preparatory process leading to the GPA Intergovernmental Review meeting.
2. The GPA National Focal Points constitute the GPA Regional Steering Committee responsible to coordinate the preparatory process of the Northeast Pacific region towards the GPA Intergovernmental Review meeting. As part of such coordination, the GPA Regional Steering Committee will be the contact between the region and the GPA Coordination Office on matters related to the GPA Intergovernmental Review. The coordination of the GPA Regional Steering Committee will fall, for the time being, on the Panamanian delegation in its capacity as chair of the present expert meeting. Therefore, the Panamanian delegation will represent the Northeast Pacific region in the Third Global Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans being organized by UNEP (Monaco, 6-10 November 2000) and where GPA-related matters, among others, will be discussed.

As part of the Northeast Pacific regional preparatory process, the present expert meeting kindly requests UNEP, through a coordinated effort between the Division of Environmental Conventions and the GPA Coordination Office, the necessary technical, human and financial support, as appropriate, for the following:

1. Preparation of an action-oriented regional assessment on land-based sources and activities as a means of identifying the priority pollutant source categories and the action needed at the national and regional level to protect the regions' marine and coastal environment. This assessment should be done on the basis of national assessments and will review for each of the thematic areas which are the focus of the GPA Intergovernmental Review (i.e., binding and non-binding agreements at the national and regional level, voluntary agreements and involvement of the private sector, capacity-building, and innovative financing and use of economic instruments), among others, the following:

- (a) state of affairs;
- (b) factors contributing to successes and shortcomings;
- (c) identification of barriers and opportunities for implementation; and
- (d) needs and possibilities for further action.

The regional assessment should include recommendations on priority activities and projects in the Northeast Pacific to be incorporated in the regional workprogramme for the period 2001-2006, and which could also be part of the GPA workprogramme to be considered at the GPA Intergovernmental Review meeting.

2. The beginning of one or more regional pilot/demonstration projects providing innovative approaches to forward implementation of the GPA. The project or projects should engage Governments and other sectors of society (promoting new partnerships) and should include the evaluation and assessment of benefits and lessons learned with regard to:

- (a) Collaboration/partnerships with the private sector and other sectors of society on initiatives related to land-based activities; and
- (b) Capacity-building programmes and initiatives aimed at strengthening institutional capabilities and addressing priority pollutant source categories.

With the above in mind, it was proposed that an area where such a demonstration project could be conducted should be identified. The expert meeting welcomes the offer by the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation to collaborate and provide advice, as appropriate, on the design and implementation of such a demonstration project.

3. Preparation of National Programmes of Action addressing land-based activities, and which should include targets, financial implications, a workplan and timetable (possibly via a GEF/GPA project).

The terms of reference and other relevant matters dealing with the preparation of the above-mentioned assessments, projects and programmes will be agreed upon between the GPA Coordination Office, the Division of Environmental Conventions and the respective Governments.

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